THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

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A Vision Of India.

PARASURAMA'S ASHRAMA.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

With axe in hand he went the whole world ound
To rid the earth of godless noxious power.
The evil kings heard strike their final hour
In his victorious tread's echoing sound
He won the broad earth girt with ocean round
With godlike might and gave it as a dower
To Kasyapa as holy penance-bower,
As temple, and as sacrificial ground,
He flung his axe across the Western seas
To win some land from their invasive might
And built his bright and sacred Asram there
And dwelt in contemplation sweet of Peace
And showed—himself a ray from Perfect Light—
How duty flowers in thought and love and prayer.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 23 JAN., 1919.

The Care and Education of Indian Children.

In a poor country like India, where millions upon millons live in huts which are narrow, low roofed, ill-ventilated, and crowded with numerous inmates, it is no wonder that the children have no room for movement and play inside, and so we often find them straying into the street, and exposed to danger of all kinds arising from the weather, and the street traffic, the gutter smells, and so on. The depression within and the risks without often bring on them—even if they escape the mortality to which babes and children are liable under the present conditions in India—feeble health and various dangerous complaints which affect them for long periods. Hence, for the children of all who are poor and lowly, of all the millions of families who are destitute or half-starved, it is necessary that our local and municipal boards as well as the state acting through the educational departments, and more especially the public-spirited men and associations should arrange for the providing of small houses where such children can be received, nursed, and brought up under the qualified, educated and medically-qualified nurses. The houses should not only be situated in healthy localities, but should have plenty of open space around them where the children can breathe free, pure and wholesome air and live daily a certain amount of healthy outdoor life in the sun and under the shadows of trees. There must be also places provided where such children may be kept segregated when they suffer from infectious complaints like small-pox, measles, and so on.

So far we have spoken of children below the age of three or four. We next pass to those above this age. Then, the precocious mind and intelligence of children in this tropical climate begins to sprout, and they seek channels of activity, life, learning, and enjoyment—running about, walking, climbing, making noise, &c. It is at this stage that the first period of school-life comes in. Then children are usually confined for six or more hours a day in the primary school. The school is in these days under the supervision of the Educational Department, aud there is much improvement over the conditions and environments of the old pial schools. Still, there is much room for improvement. As in the case of the *public* nurseries above advocated for the children of poor and destitute families, so in the case of primary schools, there is need for insisting on having open spaces and areas round them so that there may be gardens where beautiful flowers and green plants may be reared and also grounds where the children may run, climb, frisk about, and engage in various kinds of play, enjoy pure and pleasant breeze under the shadows of trees or in open and well-kept pavilions. Here, too, the health of the children must be well cared for by people who are medically-trained. The main object of the schools must be to bring up healthy children who can use their hands and legs actively and feely and who can have a sense

of the joy of life. Here they must learn more by hearing than by reading; they must look at scenes and men and boys around them; they must learn to watch the movements of the animal world around—ants, bees, flies, wasps, worms; they must learn about herbs, leaves, trees and plants; they must learn drills, songs, and lullabies, besides hearing plenty of them,—and more than all, they must learn to get rid of all timid, hesitating, and bashful modes of behaviour and to become conscious of their own powers. They may be subjected to occasional examinations, but they must not be set to prepare for examinations. This means worry and anxiety, over and above the hard work of cramming. The examination must come in as an incident in the daily programme of work or play, and go out without leaving and anxiety or bitterness behind.

Moreover, in India, we have to remember that there is a meeting or conflict of two civilisations each having a different goal in view, and a goal, too, which is diametrically opposed to that of the other. If the new life of India is to be well laid out and built on lasting foundations, it is necessary to take care that the continuity between the past and the present is well and carefully maintained. The educational system introduced into this country has not hitherto been properly appreciated in its true and full significance. Very many, or even most, of those who came under its influence regarded it mainly as a means of making a livelihood, more promising, more attractive, more paying than many or most of those which were available already. But, within the last 30 years or more, the new system has come to be truly understood. It has brought with it a new creed, a new ideal of life, and new modes of activity for the gaining of new aims and purposes in life. It has affected the minds of all who have come under its influence; it has bred new desires, impulses, emotions, aspirations, and ambitions. It has affected every branch of life and every department of thought. It has produced leaders of men, new religions, prophets of new dispensations, originators of new movements in the social and economic life of the country, and thinkers who spread their ideas around them and secure numerous disciples and supporters. The result is that new problems are constantly being brought up, and there is much struggle and bustle in the life of the land everywhere.

Men are everywhere apt to forget that this is a time of transition, and that therefore all radical and revolutionary changes must be avoided. It is absurd to suppose that, if we neglect the principle of continuity, we cannot have an evolutionary process of growth, but an anarchical or revolutionary transformation of society which will only land us in permanent disaster. An English writer has well said:—"In India the principle of growth from within is even more fundamentally important (than in Europe) by reason of her long antecedent civilisation and the strong instinct of conservation in every class." This instinct of conservation is strongest in the millions who form the masses of the people and who have remained the same under all the political upheavals which have been effected from without. It is the solid and stolid conservatism of the masses of

the people that has helped the retention of the social organism which has remained as the most permanent and indestructible of all the landmarks of India.

In order, therefore, that we may harmonise the new knowledge of the West with the old culture of the East so that they may be combined into one wisdom and one harmonious system of life, it is necessary that the foundations for a safe and steady progress must be laid in an effort made by the Indian people themselves and their leaders to cultivate the ancient learning and preserve the ancient arts and industries. But, while the products of the distinctive genius of the Indian people are retained by appealing to all healthy inborn instincts and inherited associations, it is necessary that the methods of the West must be resorted to in order that the purpose and inspiration of Indian ideals may be preserved amidst all the changes that are inevitable. Otherwise the national organism and the civilisation of Indian art and civilisation will be perverted and deflected from their own distinctive aim and normal courses; indeed this has already largely taken place. It is our women who have largely served as the strongholds of national ideals and methods of life. But even they are being brought under the new influences and the new educational processes. If nothing is done to check these methods and sources of influence, the life and culture of ancient India would have by this time disappeared from the land.

The bearing of all that has been said on the present topic of child-life and child-education must be pointed out. We have already pointed out what are the healthy means of influencing child-life and child-education in the early years of the child. Care must be taken that the national, spiritual, religious and intellectual treasures of India should be utilised in training the life and mind of the Indian child during the time spent in the secondary schools and also in the primary schools and classes of such schools. Indian tales of heroes and heroines must be presented—and attractively by means of suitable pictures—to the child mind of India, just at this early stage when it is most active and receptive. Besides, every Indian plain, hill, dale, river, tree, forest, &c., is redolent of heroic legend and marvellous incident; and all of them can be woven into the mind and memory of children, if only they are interpreted with understanding and vision. In awakening the faculties and filling the perceptions of Indian children and in training them for the practical purposes of life, it is necessary to utilise the agencies of colour and song, of the rhythm of movement and sound, so that the old life and the new environment may harmonise with each other in course of time and the new life may not come to us as a revolution which, in its resistless course, does not sweep away the ancient achievements of the spirit and prevent India from fulfilling her mission in the world as the inspirer to all that is calculated to free the human soul from the bondage of materialism.

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"Is India Civilised" by Sir John Woodroffe.

II. The Elements of Conflict.

The elements of conflict of cultures are many and varied. Before we discuss them we must remember that they are inevitable and they are further necessary in the interests of universal evolution. Sir John says well: "We call such differences types. These types are varying aspects of the One Cosmic Mind..........How are these racial types preserved? The answer is—By what is called Racial Antagonism....The antagonism is natural. Nature preserves her types by estrangement, distrust, and even hatred and not by love.........The stronger the vitality, the greater is likely to be the antagonism. The stronger the antagonism of a type, the less is the likelihood of its being influenced or absorbed by another." Racial antagonism is augmented by religious or political conflict. Sir John Woodroffe points out that a meaner cousin of racial antagonism is racial jealousy. Racial distinctiveness is the goal and it can be attained by racial diverseness, racial self-respect and racial self-preservation, and it is only pettiness of mind that has recourse to racial antagonism or its meaner cousin racial jealousy to achieve that end.

Sir John says: One of the oldest of problems is the conflict between East and West which is now becoming more acute owing to the growth of populations, increased communication, a closer contact of cultures, growth of knowledge, economic questions, the assertion of the Asiatic consciousness, the intensity of the struggle for life and other causes." All these causes have brought the cultures into close proximity and into situations where conflict is inevitable, however much we may wish to gloze over them with fine words and phrases. The stress and pressure of life and the ever-increasing desires of men have led to the migrations of peoples and the consequent conflicts and conquests and enslavements of man by man, though in a rational scheme of life the diverse races could live in peace and amity and attain cosmic harmony without each surrendering its individual note.

It is not possible to travel over each special area of conflict here, but we may mention briefly those departments of life where the conflict is going on acutely whether perceived or unperceived. In the realm of language there is a deliberate anglicisation. The divine Sanskrit and the beautiful vernaculars have been deposed from their position of prominence and glory. Sir John says: "In this country there is no law which compels any one to learn English, but compulsion exists all the same for those who would pass through School to University, who would qualify for government service or for any professions. Such direct or indirect imposition of culture is in the nature of things. Dominating races must necessarily affect others. Those who complain of it waste their time in what is futile. Instead of complaint they should maintain themselves and their own. Failure to do so is the biological sin. What fails to find defenders is not worth preservation." This is one of the subjects of acute conflict and our languages are now fighting for bare existence, and Heaven knows what the issue will be.

Sir John Woodroffe says further:

"To this must be added other causes in conflict with the maintenance of the traditional culture—economic and social. Were it not that there has been no general primary education, and that such education as is now given is necessarily confined to comparatively few, and to the fact that there has been a rise of national consciousness, the whole of India was likely to have been Anglicised." There has been a violent upsetting of our social and economic order by the civilisation of the West. False ideas of equality and liberty and absurd high-flown notions of happiness and pleasure have invaded home life and social life and the contentment and reverences of the old world order have either wholly or partially disappeared. As Sir John says it is the fortunate non-dispersion of the new false ideals among the masses through a radically wrong but widespread system of primary education that has been responsible for the little cultural self-preservation that exists as yet in this land. A free and compulsory primary education based on the vernaculars and the epics and giving true ideas about life is a blessing; but a smattering of English and a non-religious training creating the demons of unrest and hate are atrocious social evils and will result in the disappearance of our culture from the world.

We have further elements of conflict in regard to the caste system and the system of marriage. The Western culture with its theoretical equality covering like a garment a multitude of hatreds and inequalities is in conflict with the Eastern concept of spiritual equality and social diversity (not inequality). In regard to marriage also there is an acute conflict between the two cultures in regard to the woman's legitimate place in life, the real function of womanhood, the place of love in life, and the general conception of marital ideals and felicities.

But especially acute is the conflict in the realm of religion. The religious culture of the West has come here on a proselytising mission. The evangelisation of India is not merely a spiritual factor but is a general cultural factor as well. Sir John says: "But the vulgarity of turning religion into a means of money-making and Empire-building has been reserved for our political and commercial time." He says further that the idea of hiring men to preach religion is foreign to the genius of Hinduism. In our schools and colleges there is either no religion at all, which condition of affairs is a careful though unconscious preparation of the mental soil for the later cultural anglicisation, or there is training in the precepts of the Christian faith which is expounded with the object of overthrowing the religion of the land by capturing the hearts and imaginations of the youth of the land. The Indian parents play with fire thinking only of their banking accounts, though only folly or indifference can rejoice in fiddling while the whole structure is burning.

Another special element of conflict is in regard to what is known as the standard of life. As Sir John points out, Mr. Archer thinks that "to want more wants" is the *summum bonum* of life. Sir John says: "There is nothing 'spiritual' about this doctrine nor is it, as so crudely stated, a sound and satisfying one, at any rate from the point of view of those addressed. The Vishnu Purana more truly says

that by feeding your desires you cannot satisfy them. This doctrine will not be found of benefit from any but the trader's standpoint. It is however the fact that the adoption of the counsel "to want more wants" may lead to the increased purchase of English motor cars, Scotch Whiskey, and so forth. The pockets of such a 'civiliser' are filled when he gets the uncivilised to learn this part of the lesson." The modern method is to economise time for the sake of filling leisure hours with cloying pleasures and to fill life with killing work to escape the thought of killing death. Though the average standard of living must rise with the progress of civilisation, it is a question whether it is desirable to plunge in the Western whirlpools of active worldly pleasure wherein a seeming cheerfulness is kept up to cover the innumerable heartaches of modern life.

More than the standard of life the very texture of life is feeling the stress of the conflict. This is the area where the conflict is acutest and unceasing. Sir John Woodroffe says very well: "Again the presence of a powerful but alien civilisation, naturally and without any State interference whatever, affects every department of Indian life. The joint family and caste system seem to be weakening. Whether and how long they will exist only the future will show. The village life as it was is ceasing to exist. With the crowding into towns English habits are acquired as also English modes of living. The old collectivist spirit has to some extent given way to individualism and so forth. Some of these changes were perhaps "inevitable" though I do not like the word. In the flood of change care must yet be taken that one is not swept off one's feet."

Our Social Problem and the Bhagavad Gita By K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri B.A., B.L.

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Notes and Comments.

Life means activity, movement, struggle, effort of one kind or another. So long as the individual *lives* he must assert himself in the effort after self-expression. But we must not forget that life or movement is of two kinds,—outer and inner. We can either always look into the outer world through the senses which are "the windows of the soul" or train ourselves to perform the difficult process of turning the mind and senses back into the interior self and purify it by checking the flow outwards of the emotions and impulses of our nature. In Europe men are constantly trained to look into the outer world and make it subservient to the individual's purposes in life. In India, on the other hand, though we recognise that this procedure is necessary and cannot altogether be avoided, we are ever taught that man can train himself to control his impulses towards the outer world, to curtail his wants, and to purify his mind so that he may cultivate the inner vision, and the peace and bliss which is his true self.

*
* *

The higher Western man whose activities have always been of the outgoing variety finds it impossible to believe that the world can get on without him. So long as there is selfishness and sorrow in this world, he thinks he must work for their removal. The object is, doubtless, praiseworthy. Men, whether in the West or in the East,—men, we mean, of the higher sort—certainly feel the impulse to intervene and do what they can to advance the cause of right and lesson the suffering in the world according to the measure of their opportunities and inherent tendencies. But in the East, we have also learnt that, as new men are

constantly being born and as the material and social enviroment are increasingly productive of conflict, the attempt to put an end to suffering and sensualism is bound to fail in an increasing measure. Moreover, the Rishis have proclaimed the *Adhyâtma-Vidya* or the science of the Supreme Self and the practice of Dharma which is to lead to the bliss of the Atman which when attained, brings on the serene contentmet and peace which puts an end for ever to the sorrow of *samsaric* life, whether on earth or in other worlds. The practice of the precepts of Dharma brings on, in due course of spiritual evolution, the ability to turn the mind and senses away from the external world, to moderate worldly desires and needs, and to meditate on the interior, Self (*Pratyagatman*) which is beyond the dualities of gain and loss, of joy and sorrow, desire and aversion, love and hatred, &c.

* * *

We do not deny that there is plenty of wrong-doing in the world, of man wronging his brother-man. It is our duty—the duty of those who have a higher sense of the meaning of life—to do all we can to put down wrong and injustice. The Allied Nations of Europe and America made war against Germany in order to put down her career of barbarities against civilisation. But no one should suppose that, when Germany has been worsted and Germans have been helped to become human once more, all men will have become lifted into a higher plane of ethical life and endeavour. Sin, sensualism, strife will exist as long as the world lasts and man continues to inhabit it. The higher man's warfare against the lower will continue in every region of state-life and in the larger sphere of international intercourse, and there is no reason to suppose that it will ever cease for want of fit objects to strike.

* * *

There is, however, another war—the war which the individual is enabled to carry on against his own passions, the spiritual war which he makes to purify himself by getting rid of his egotism and his love of self-aggrandisement. This process of self-reformation, when once it is started, can go on till it ends in that self-knowledge which alone leads to the serene bliss of the interior self as "the one existence only without a second." If ever all men can attain to anything even like an attempt to tread on the path to reach this supreme goal, then only will it be possible to succeed in producing anything like a condition of universal peace on earth. Then there will be no need either of an *international*, or even a *national*, police to put down strife between nations, communities or individuals. Then only can there be established a Kingdom of God here on earth. Establish, first, a Kingdom of God in every human mind, and then peace on earth and good will among men—the fruits expected from the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth in the future—will be assured,—and not till then.

* * *

Hinduism strikes at the root of evil in the individual heart and attempts to purify it of all evil desires and impulses. Christians and Europeans in the West, on the other hand, want to strike at the passions of *other* men,—to make war on *other* men, to shed their blood, and to exploit their resources and occupy their territories in order to subject them to their own control. No doubt this aggressive policy of conquest ending in administrative supremacy results in the establishment of a peace, but it is of an artificial kind. For, the subject communities give it only a temporary acquiescence. Even "mild" Indians have begun to agitate for self-government, and self-determination. But consider the attitude of the European communities subjected to foreign control,—of the Poles, the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Croatians, &c. All Europe is in a revolutionary fever of agitation.

* * *

What the crowd wants in Europe is a new creed,—a divine faith which will still the passions of men and open their hearts to the light of love which can alone bind human beings in a lasting bond of friendship. It is not by laws, leagues, or legions that the nations of Europe or elsewhere can be bound together in the bonds of friendship. President Wilson's Mission to Europe is to lay the basis of the

"World's friendship" in a universal League of Nations. All civilised and enlightened men are bound to wish him well, but it is not by *external standards* that men's love of peace can be truly judged, or by artificial treaty arrangements that the consolidation of communities into a peaceful union can be brought about. What the Western world wants is *Chitta-suddhi*, the purification of the heart from the consuming lusts of wealth and territory, from that earth-hunger and that love of dominance which leads to ceaseless wars of aggression and exploitation. Self-culture and self-conquest can alone lead to spiritual peace and freedom,—not the frail culture of human desires, impulses and passions which aims at a control of the yet unsubdued forces and processes of the material world and ends by establishing the tyranny of man over man and of nation over nation.

The Bhagavad Gita.

With an English Exposition

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha Trichinopoly.)

ADHYAYA II.

(*continued.*)

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

O high-souled among men, the man of wisdom whom these (contacts of the senses with the outer world) do not affect and to whom pain and pleasure are equal and alike is fit for the attainment of liberation (Moksha).

NOTES:

1. He is unaffected because of his realisation of the Eternal Self. (नित्यात्मदर्शनात् as Sri Sankaracharya says)

2. Nilakanta says thet these sense contacts should not affect a man during the waking state or the dreamful state or असंप्रज्ञातसमाधि.

3. पुरुष The term is used to show that the soul is only a sojourner in the body. पूर्षु अष्टासु वसतीति पुरुषः (He who dwells in the 8 towns). The eight are stated thus.

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि खलु पंच तथापराणि
ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि मन आदि चतुष्टयं च ।
प्राणादिपंचकमथो वियदादिकं च
कामश्च कर्म च नमः पुनरष्टमीभूः ॥

4. धीरं is interpreted as धीमन्तं, or ध्यायिनं, or योगिनं, or धियं इरयन्तं—(The men of wisdom or of devotion, or of concentration, or he who controls and directs his mind).

5. If bondage were natural to the soul, it will never go unless the soul is destroyed. But it is foreign to the soul and can be removed. The illuminer and the illumined can never be one and the same.

6. This sameness and equableness can be attained not by flying away from pain and pleasure but by self-discipline which enables us to achieve balance of nature.

7. Sri Ramanuja says that he who does his allotted duty in a spirit of detachment will not be affected by the sense-contacts.

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्वदार्शीभिः ॥ १६ ॥

The unreal and transient hath no being the real and eternal never ceases to be, they who have attained the faculty of seeing the truth of things know the real nature of both.

NOTES:

The sense-contacts are unreal and fleeting. The soul is real and eternal. In the case of every thing we see on analysis that the attribute of existence is common to all though the other transient attributes vary. Without the basis of the permanent and eternal the elements of fleeting change cannot exist at all.

2. The सद्वस्तु exists always—even in deep sleep, because the soul realises सुख and अज्ञान then and remembers these on waking up.

3. What is unreal? Whatever has परिच्छेद (limitation) परिच्छेद is of 3 kinds—कालपरिच्छेद, देशपरिच्छेद, वस्तु परिच्छेद (limitation in time, limitation in space, and limitation by other limited things) वस्तु परिच्छेद is of 3 kinds—सजातीयभेद, विजातीयभेद, and स्वगत-

भेद (differentiation from like objects, differentiation from unlike objects, and internal differentiation). Some say that it is 5 kinds—जीवेश्वरभेदः, जीवजगद्भेदः, जीवपरस्परभेदः, इश्वरजगद्भेदः, जगत्परस्भेदः It has well been said: आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा।

4. तत्त्वदर्शिभिः— वस्तुयाथात्म्यदर्शनशीलैः ब्रह्मविद्भिः (those who are *habituated* by discipline and meditation to know and realise the truth and real nature of things). The Sruthi says: वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम्।

5. Sri Ramanujacharya says that असत् means the body and सत् means the soul.

6. Sri Madhwacharya says that असत् means Prakriti and that सत् means God and that the verse says that both are real. The verse is thus split up: न सतः विद्यते अभावः न अभावः विद्यते सतः Another meaning given by him is that असत् means sin and सत् means right and that the verse means that from wrong no good can result and that from right no evil can result. In this sense the verse would be an answer to Arjuna's statement पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः। Both the meanings are very interesting but they do not relate directly to the context. The verse is an explanation of the previous verse which says सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते and the verse previous to it which says तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत. The soul is eternal. The cause of शोक मोह lies really in the धीप्रपंच (the world of mind). The news of a son having been born in a man's absence causes pleasure though the birth was long before then. The death of relation causes pain only on its being communicated to us. The same thing that once caused pain now causes pleasure. As Kalidasa says in Vikramorvasiya the very objects which caused pain in the absence of the beloved cause pleasure in his presence (पादास्ता एव शशिनः सुखयन्ति गात्रं बाणास्त एव मदनस्य मनोऽनुकूलाः। संरम्भरूक्षमिव सुन्दरि यद्यदासीत्त्वत्संगमेन तत्तदिवानुनीतम् ॥) If by steady discipline, concentration, meditation, devotion, and introspection we realise the Eternal we would not be agitated by the sense-contacts but would attain Eternal Bliss.

(*To be continued.*)

Olla Podrida.

Mr. Lloyd George spoke recently about the resurrection of rural life. Resurrection? It has come to that there. What about us here? Does any one plead for the stopping of the murder of rural life. So one country is resuscitating the very thing which another is deliberately murdering.

"O purblind race of miserable men!
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a lifelong trouble for themselves
By taking true for false or false for true.

* * *

Russia is getting on famously. The papers announce that Petrograd is fast becoming a cemetry. Prince Kropotkin has been murdered. The great case of Trotsky *v.* Lenin is going on. Hungary is in the throes of Bolshevism. So the aftermath of the war is dreadful enough.

* * *

The *Merchant of Venice* has after all been acted by Indian ladies at Madras and a new link has been established between womanhood and publicity in India. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri has said well in his recent foreword to a Tamil book called *Pancharatnam*; "To the women of India the lives pourtrayed in this book make an eloquent plea for things of enduring beauty and excellence, for truth, charity and devotion to all that is good and noble and for all those virtues, pieties, and unbought graces of life, which today are in danger of disappearance before the aggression of noisier ambitions."

* * *

In the issue dated 16th January, *New India* complains of overcrowding and smoking in Indian theatres. But who cares for this? Pleasure of any sort is welcome under any conditions. Sanity and sanitariness are old-world virtues quite out of date and out of place today.

The Congress season has been followed by an epilogue of mutual abuse. When shall we get over this state of things?

* * *

The Poona battle over the Patel Bill is going on with varying fortunes. Even shoes are making their appearance as weapons of war and hurtle through the air like æroplanes.

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The latest bit of news is that Sir Sinha has been made the Under Secretary of State and is going to become a peer. When he becomes a peer there, he will be peerless in India.

SCRUTATOR.

The Ideal of Womanhood.

(The following ably written article has been sent to us for publication. It is written by a Hindu lady of high family, maintaining all true Vedic traditions and producing noble types of Indian manhood and womanhood).

The World-war, happily come to a close, has demanded may a sacrifice from distressed humanity. Thousands of heroic men have abandoned themselves to the front, and as an indisputable proof of their loyalty have sacrificed their lives on the battlefield. When these generous souls are to be praised for their glorious deeds, women should not be left without their share of recognition. For has not every one of us known to-day how even women belonging to the Aristocracy have gone out as nurses to tend the poor wounded soldiers that lie in the hospitals dreaming nothing but the victory of their country? Most of the munitions have been manufactured by women in the numberless factories throughout the United Kingdom. They drive tram cars in men's places and are rendering many such indispensable services to the country in its most urgent time of need. We know that some of our western sisters are suffragettes and have succeeded so far in winning from the Parliament equal rights with men for themselves. When such a fight for the freedom of women has proved successful in the civilized countries how can it help entering also into India?

This illustrious land which once produced many a heroic daughter of whom every child, no sooner than it gets out of its cradle, learns to know, sustains that distinction no longer. Yet we are not devoid of hopes that she will once more hold her proud position amongst the nations of the world. We are happy to foresee that the women of India will soon rise up from the sad obscurity into which they have fallen for the last several centuries. Already the question of female education and female liberty has arisen among the leading men of the present day that work sincerely for the cause of the Nation. But it has not yet been solved. The Indian woman is slowly beginning to realise that she does not hold her proper and rightful position in life. And it is time that all sincere workers should render help immediately for the cause of those who are perhaps the more important half of the human race. For it is truly an educated woman that makes her husband's home happy and brings forth intelligent sons on whom a strong nation must depend.

When wise politicians fight for 'Home Rule' with true zeal and courage, women who form the half of humanity should be co-workers and not be left in entire ignorance of the country's good under Self-Government. Woman can influence affairs a great deal. By nature she is more quick-witted than man and has a more delicate way of doing things. Though man is working hard for the welfare of his country, it is woman that can make that work bear better and more abundant fruit when she has her share of the work and does it well, too, as she can.

The Indian woman has in her several excellent qualities such as her sweet gentle nature, her generous and loving heart, her remarkable virtue of chastity scarcely excelled elsewhere, and her submissive preparedness for all that her married life must demand of her. All these at present lie half-hidden within her and would, if made to shine on fitting occasions, prove her altogether a more splendid type of woman than any other country might now be proud to possess. Although we are filled with sincere admiration while speaking of our western sisters rendering splendid services no less than men in the present war, it is not envy or wonder that we feel when we praise them. Have we not many such examples of self-sacrifice shown perhaps in even a greater measure in the India of long past generations? We are glad with a conscious pride that our

women still retain something of the same spirit. What the Indian woman needs today with all her greatest merits is *true* education,—that which develops the mind and elevates the character. We are afraid that the helpers of the woman's cause in India might rest too contented, seeing that in most parts of the country girls are having elementary education and that in Madras and other important places they receive even University education. But it is after all only a poor satisfaction. For, the sudden emergence from seclusion and obscurity to so much mixing in society might, to a certain extent, prove injurious to some at least. An artless Indian girl with her unsophisticated mind naturally delights much in the company of her western sisters and finds their bold independence and freedom at once pleasing as a contrast to her own bashful, quiet nature. In following their examples there is a dangerous tendency for her to become flippant and pretentious, letting go all her womanly reserve and modesty which are inherent in herself.

Her regular attendance in the College, her pleasant evenings outside, and her studies at night engage her a whole day and would naturally spare her no sufficient interval for the proper care of her children and her home. Moreover it does allow the servants of the household to take advantage of her pre-occupation besides that of her husband, to be sluggish and neglect their work. Eventually her domestic peace becomes ruffled by this disordered state of home affairs. But certainly we cannot say that collegiate life does our women any real harm. Only they do not achieve anything very profitable considering the years that they spend through the College course. All that a girl gains out of this might make her proficient in English and other studies, and, if she had any true taste for literature, might contribute to her great delight in Shakespeare, Milton and such like immortal poets.

An unmarried girl till 20 or 25 finds her college life to be without any hindrances, but such indefinite postponement of matrimony would in itself be a violation of the high principles of our religion and detrimental to the very sublimity of those ideals of ours cherished so ardently with regard to marriage. Constant association with the women of the West may encourage a girl who finds herself unfortunate in marriage to forsake the path of righteousness and the sacred duty she owes to her husband. Hindu ideals of married life held so sacred amongst ourselves differ profoundly from those of Occidental nations. Their great love of independence and unrestricted freedom gives them rather a dislike for matrimony and their education has often carried them astray so far that they are found quite unwilling and unprepared for the duties of a wife.

Of the ideal Hindu woman, West has very little knowledge today. To her, married life seems to be the highest expression of human joy and happiness, and her duty at home which she performs with ever so pure a devotion consists but in the service of her lord. "If it were conceivable to the Hindu son" writes Sister Nivedita in her book. 'The Web of Indian life' "that his mother could cease for one moment to be faithful to his father, whatever the provocation, the coldness or even cruelty to which she might be subjected, at that moment his idealism of her would be a living pain." What statement could be truly more striking than this, coming from this talented lady converted by Swami Vivekananda into our ancient religion?

As ideals of womanhood cherished so feelingly in our land, careers ever so brilliant as Joan of Arc and Florence of Nightingale are far from appealing to the Hindu mind which has long been accustomed to hold woman as the inseparable part of the household. In no other country married woman is held in so high an esteem as in India. It is her glorious aspiration to die before her husband. "I must precede not follow" thus prays every Hindu woman from the bottom of her heart, and when her prayer granted she lies in eternal sleep people around her admire with deep reverence, "That is a blessed woman." Thus with honour is she borne to the funeral pyre and every year an important ceremony is celebrated in token of esteem of her name.

Motherhood is another glorious distinction that woman longs to achieve. Even a child wife realises the dignity and does not but feel proud in finding that she would shortly become a mother. How enchanting it is to behold strong stalwart sons bowing at the feet of their mother for her blessings!

A well-known writer has truly observed that East is East and West is West and that

no human agency could bring the two together. It is needless to say that the impossibility of bringing the East and West together chiefly consists in the difference of their ideals and their ways of thought. And it is natural that ideals must differ when their sources are so far removed as Cape Comorin and Iceland. But in general spirit none could divide essentially the souls of these two mighty civilizations. It were infinitely better that every people should hold to their own forms of ideals and traditions than by wishing to be tangled into each other's.

We cannot reconcile ourselves to the fatuous cries raised almost everywhere that because the woman of England wanted to have their votes in Parliament women should get them also in India; and we are not of those who would fain be blind to the great forces which are moving us. When our countrymen are determined to secure the privelege of self Government, we can by no means stem the colossal tide of Nationalism which must equally affect the minds of women in India. It would do us good if our women realised fully the greatness of their country and her past and make up their minds to help their beloved country into a New India. For this very purpose a true education becomes the sternest necessity but we do not hold that it must partake of the nature of High School or University Education. We have had enough of superb specimens of womanhood for our examples and with such attributes as forbearance, humility, an inexhaustible sympathy and devotion, the Indian woman can do more to her country than clamouring wildly for a vote in the Electorate.

None other affords a more striking example to this than the magnificent soul that stood by her husband and our noblest patriot in these dark days of trouble in South Africa, just as a graceful creeper would cling and twine itself to its tree even in the bitterest blast of wind. Prison life made no difference to her, and she gladly submitted to the ordeals of separation from her husband in a great cause. It would be worth remembering how much she contributed to his success and how much she continued to be his source of inspiration. Let India produce more women of this kind who would willingly share in men's struggles. Then an India of renovated pride and vigour will have the heritage of a near prosperity. University graduates and those who have received brilliant diplomas are no doubt valuable in a community but in India and as her true children we should always covet more heroines of moral greatness, pure love and devotion.

Some Ethical Lessons from our Epics.

[By P. Ananthaswami]

(A paper read at the Dasara Conference held under the auspices of the S. M. R. V. Assn., Karamanay, Trivandrum).

We Indians, have a proud record of glorious achievements for the interest and benefit of the civilised world. And we can contemplate with pardonable satisfaction the work of our ancestors in all departments of human activity. Look where we may, in the annals of the history of the world, no nation has exhibited such a genius for rhetoric and sublimity of thought as the pure and pious Brahmanas of yore. Their marvellous intellect, spirit of inwardness and passion for truth, displayed in every line of the epic and philosophical works they have written, compel thought and call forth admiration. These Apostles of Hindu Culture have proved beyond doubt that the pen wins in virtue of its mildly persuasive and hence more impressive force mightier and more lasting victories than the sword.

The value and importance of the Ramayana and the Maha Bharata cannot be rated too highly. Time and again have they elicited the passionate and sincere admiration of scholars Eastern no less than Western. They are a real mine of wealth and they contain information of the highest import to all men who seek "to know in singleness of heart the history of our race on earth and the relations of man with that Infinite Power above us, around us, and in us." There are indeed few religious books in the whole world which can stand comparison with our great Epics in brilliancy of description, in fertility of thought and nobility of ideas, in deep piety and passionate feeling, in the solemn and serious interpretation of the all-puzzling problem of life and above all in that divine rapture for Peace.

When were our Epics written? By whom? When did the authors live? Were they rich

or poor? Were their blood blue or red? What were the sources of their information? Did they really write the books or somebody else? What internal evidence is there for determining the age at which they flourished? Interesting and fundamental as these and other like questions are from the point of view of the Orientalist, the Epics themselves are *the* things most important to the Eastern mind. I may warn you beforehand that I do not propose to answer such queries. The *Ramayana*, it is well-known, celebrates the heroic deeds of Shri Rama. It contains no less than 48,000 lines and is marked by a jewelled beauty of diction and pervaded by the powerful perfume of Religion. The *Maha Bharata* is 200,000 lines in length. It has its own *curiosa félicitas* of words, its own sweet and haunting melodies. Its central story turns on the strife between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Numerous episodes, the spiritual insight and literary charm of which speak so eloquently for themselves, gather round the main plot. The *Bhagavat Gita* is the heart of the *Maha-Bharata*, replete with the most precious nuggets of gold.

Friends, to every man, his sphere of activity—physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual—is a battle-field where the conflict is between the call of knowledge and duty and the temptations of ignorance and passion. The higher self and the lower are ever at war. Whether we consider the individual or the family or the community or the nation, this struggle is never absent. Without due and full preparation to face the battle, the result will be invariably defeat and ruin.

One could best equip oneself to fight the battle of life by giving one's days to the study and contemplation of our Epics. They contain the basic principles by which to regulate the conduct of life. Their teachings are of universal application. Men of all creeds, all callings, all ranks, and even all temperaments could draw inspiration and help from them. Their contents are like the waters of a perennial spring from which the measure of the water that could be taken is simply the measure of the drawing-pot. We all know that Shakespeare is a universal favourite and is read alike by the careless reader and the profound student. We also know how differently shakespeare impresses the former on the one hand, and students like Goethe, Carlyle or Emerson on the other. The limit of Shakespeare's teachings is not the limit of Shakespeare himself, but of the mind of his reader. The same is the case with the *Ramayana* and the *Maha-Bharata*, and, indeed, with all really grea books, They contain priceless teachings, teachings than which there is nothing better for the uplifting of humanity. In a recent issue of *Public Opinion*, a vigorous English Weekly, there is quoted a tribute to the Christian Bible from the pen of Dr. J. G. Frazer, the author of the *Golden Bough*: "The reading of the Bible seems to lift us for a while out of ourselves, our little cares and little sorrows, into communion with those higher powers whatever they are, which existed before man began to be, and which will exist when the whole human race, as we are daily reminded by the cataclysms and convulsions of nature, shall be swept out of existence for ever. It strengthens in us the blind conviction or the trembling hope that somewhere, beyond these earthly shadows, there is a world of light eternal where the obstinate questionings of the mind will be answered and the heart find rest." This description would apply with equal force to the two Indian Epics. Our Epics are not dead, mere things of the past. They throb with life, light and fire. And the contact with the light that burns in them will certainly impart an electric stimulus to the inner spirit of man and rouse it up to the height of its intrinsic greatness and glory. The *Bhagavat Gita* alone marks the highest point attained of philosophic imagination and it is the conspectus of the numberless thoughts taught by the greatest preachers of humanity. There is, I believe no soul so dull but is not inspired and led captive by this book of books, this precious Bible of Humanity.

O for words to describe the "Divine Philosophy' that one meets at every step? It is quite charming and is in the words of Milton,

"Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets
Where no crude surfeit reigns."

Our Epics deal completely and comprehensively with the knotty question of man, his origin, his life and his future. What is

man? Western Science has been studying man and has as yet been unable to arrive at a satisfactory answer to the question. In a recent book, "*Science and the Human Mind*" by a Scientist couple, Mr. and Mrs. Whetham of Cambridge, I find on page 283, "considered mechanically, a man is a somewhat complicated piece of mechanism of certain dimensions. To the chemist he is a chemical laboratory. To the physicist he illustrates processes such as osmosis or electrolytic conduction, and the atoms of the chemist are resolved into corpuscles or electrons, the vibrations of which emit the electro-magnetic radiation known as radiant heat. By the physiologist, he is resolved into a collection of cells. To the anthropologist and zoologist the man is an individual of a certain race. To the psychologist, he is primarily a mind and his typical product is a thought. To this doctor he is an obscure and ill-understood piece of machinery, mechanical, chemical, and psychological; While to his Vicar he is essentially an immortal soul to be saved or lost."

Prof. J. Arthur Thompson who has made many contributions to Evolution admits in his *Introduction to Science* that all our scientific experience is rounded with a mystery. He quotes the following passage from Prof. Sir E. Lankaster: No sane man has ever pretended, since science became a definite body of doctrine, that we know or ever can hope to know or conceive of the possibility of knowing whence the mechanism has come, why it is there, whither it is going, and what may or may not be beyond and beside it, which our senses are incapable of appreciating. These things are not 'explained' by science and never can be."

This agnostic attitude towards the origin, purpose and goal of humanity may suffice for certain temperaments which may perhaps be able to maintain a pious adherence to it. The well-known interview between Napoleon and Laplace furnishes a historic instance of this. In reply to Napoleon's query about the place of God in his scheme of nature, the great mathematician is said to have coolly and confidently replied, "Sire, I have no need of that hypothesis." Ancient India too, had her agnostics and atheists. We know however, on the other hand, that there have been intellectual giants in all countries (Newton, Faraday, Clerk Maxwell, Stokes and Lord Kelvin to mention a few names from British Science) who hold strong convictions on the origin and destiny of man.

For most minds it is difficult, if not impossible to maintain a consistent agnostic attitude towards Problems which are usually relegated to Religion, but which are as important to the layman and the man of science as to the most pious philosopher. Hence there have been attempts to reconcile the differences between Science and Religion.

(*To be continued.*)

The Bolepur School.

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI.

Among the recent experiments in the direction of inaugurating a higher national life by proper educational institutions is the excellent school established at Shantiniketan by Sir Rabindranath Tagore. The highest truths in the realms of education as understood in the East and the West and in the past and the present have been the ideals of the school, and under the guidance of the great poet-saint the ideals have been realised in the daily life of the school. Mr. Pearson's *Shantiniketan* and Tagore's lecture on the school contained in his *Personality* reveal the unique features of the school very well. The development of the nature of the child is carefully watched and guided and strenuous efforts are made to train every boy to be a true patriot and a true Indian. The classes are held in open air under the shades of trees and there is no unnatural divorce between the soul and nature as in the modern educational barracks in towns. The boys are early taught self-reliance and are allowed to supervise the school discipline and punish breaches of it in their jevenile courts. Mr. Pearson says well: "Education consists, not in giving information which the boys will forget as soon as they conveniently can without danger of failing in their examinations, but in allowing the boys to develop their own characters in the way which is natural to them." Individual attention is paid to each boy. The fine arts of the land are brought to their minds and hearts early in life, and a vital place is given to Indian literature and history in the scheme of studies. Above love all the spiritual training of the boys is well attended to. Tagore is trying to realise in the school the great ideals of life in India's golden age and says in his

own beautiful words: "My heart responded to the call and I determined to do what I could to bring to the surface, for our daily use and purification, the stream of ideals that originated in the summit of our past, flowing underground in the depth of India's soil,— the ideals of simplicity of life, clarity of spiritual vision, purity of heart, harmony with the universe, and consciousness of the infinite personality in all creation." The great school is thus one of the centres of the higher life in India. The conduct of the school affairs on a proper basis is an expensive matter. Mr. Pearson says: "One of the reasons which make it impossible to make the school a self-supporting institution is that the number of teachers has to be so large in proportion to the number of students in order to ensure small classes and individual attention." Sir Tagore has put into the school his Nobel prize and the royalties got by him on his books. He is now touring in Southern India and will be glad if the South Indian public help his school to become a great national institution. It is hoped that his appeal will meet with a wide and adequate response in Southern India.

The Week.

The elevation to the Peerage of the Under-Secretary of State for India, Sir S. P. Sinha, is officially announced.

* * *

Elsewhere in this issue we publish an appeal by Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri in aid of the excellent school established at Shantiniketan by the Great National Poet of India Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore. The appeal speaks for itself and since it is in aid of an institution which realises in its daily life "the ideals of simplicity of life, clarity of spiritual vision, purity of heart, harmony with the universe, and consciousness of the infinite personality in all creation," we are sure it will meet with a ready and generous response. The Great Poet-saint is expected to be in Trichinopoly during the first week of February and deliver some lectures. Admission will be by tickets of Rs. 2 each. For students Re. 1 only. The exact date of his arrival and the subject of the lectures will be announced in our next issue. Meanwhile tickets may be purchased at the Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam.

Wit and Wisdom.

An old man went into a Life Insurance office and requested to be insured. The company asked his age. His reply was "Ninety-four."

"Why, my good man, we cannot insure you," said the Company.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because you are ninety-four."

"What of that?" cried the old man. "Look at the statistics, and they will tell you that fewer men die after ninety-four than before it."

* * *

Defending Counsel: "You say that the wall is eight feet high, and that you were standing on the ground—not mounted on a ladder or anything?"

Witness: "I do."

Counsel (triumphantly): "Then perhaps you will kindly explain how you, a man a little over five feet, could see over a wall eight feet high, and watch the prisoner's actions;"

Witness (calmly): "There's a hole in the wall!"

* * *

Preacher: "Let everyone in the congregation who desires to go to the Better Land stand up."

Almost everybody rose.

Preacher: "Now let everybody who wants to go to the other place stand up."

No one rose.

After a minute or two a man in the back seat slowly got up and said:—

"I don't particularly want to go to the other place, but I am willing to stand up rather than let the minister go there alone."

* * *

His Lordship: "Prisoner, you have the right of challenging any of the jury if you desire to do so."

Prisoner: "Right y'are, guv'nor. I'll fight that little black-whiskered bloke at the end if he'll step outside."

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